1. Introduction

Advertising plays a major role in modern life. It shapes the attitudes of the society and the individual and inevitably influences consumer behaviour. The consumer has to contend with a huge amount of information and be able to make a choice, draw conclusions and make important decisions. The most important task for a business advertising itself is to present its product in such a manner that the whole environment around the buyer turns into a positive emotional stimulus. The main goal of advertising a certain product or service is to attract the consumer's attention and analyse the impact of advertising on consumer behaviour, which is determined by a multitude of factors, in which the behavioural factors play the most important role.

Advertising is one of the most important and a basic ingredient in today's business environment. Without advertising neither the industry nor the consumer can survive. Industry cannot survive because; it will not have any tool to communicate to the consumers. Survival becomes difficult for consumers because, they will not have any information about the product, service or company. Hence, comparison and search for a better product is impossible.

2. Statement of the problem

Advertising has become a universal practice in order to influence the buying decision of consumers in a highly competitive environment. The final aim of every advertisement is to instigate the actual behaviour of the targeted audience, whether purchase intention or actual consumption. If an advertising strategy fails to achieve the same, the million dollars spent are not worth it. Kerala being mainly a consumer state, without any strong industrial or manufacturing base, only consumer goods advertisements were relevant to this market. Additionally, consumers in Kerala are exposed to several new products every day followed by marketers' advertising techniques. Therefore it will be interesting to investigate the effect of advertisement on consumer's behaviour. From a business perspective this research would be useful in understanding the attitude and perceptions of Kerala consumers towards advertisements. Consequently this study was an attempt to measure the effect of advertising on consumer behaviour in the consumer durables market. In fact, this study helped to know the effectiveness of advertising on consumers, the attitude of consumers towards advertising and the relationships between the demographic character of consumers and advertising strategies in the durables market of Kerala. In the process of the conversion of this actual problem faced by the consumer durables market into a research problem, the topic of the study was identified as effect of advertising on consumer behaviour. The title of the research problem is to be framed as follows:- "Effect of advertisements on consumer behaviour and brand preference with special reference to selected consumer durables in Kerala".

3. Significance of the study

Advertisements play an important role in the economy of Kerala because the State has been in a stage of transition from the status of a producer to a consumer. Most of the requirements of the State, especially in the case of consumer durable products are met by the supplies from outside. The manufacturers and producers of consumer durable products find Kerala as a potential market for their products and services. They recognise the fact that their sales can be boosted through

the various advertising strategies in different media to influence the potential consumers. Hence a study of analyzing the effect of advertisements of manufactures / producers through various print and electronic media to shaping the behaviour of the prospective consumers in the state like Kerala assumes great importance.

4. Objectives of the Study

Objectives of the study are:

1. To study the demographic profile of the respondents and their advertising exposure to different media.
2. To examine the respondent's general attitude towards advertising.
3. To examine the effect of advertisement on awareness and purchase of consumer durable products.
4. To assess the effect of consumer durables advertising in different media.
5. To assess the effect of advertising on brand preference of consumer durables.
6. To study the important factors affecting the customers while purchasing consumer durables.

5. Hypothesis of the study

1. There is no significant association between demographic variables and advertising exposure to different media.
2. There is no significance difference in possession of consumer durables irrespective of different groups of Occupation, Education and Income.
3. The effect of advertising media on the consumer's behavior of consumer durables is different.
4. There is no significant difference between attitude toward advertising and respondents' demographic characteristics.
5. There is no significant difference between demographic variables and the most effective medium of advertising of consumer durables.
6. Advertisement is the most important parameter for brand preference of consumer durables.
7. The impacts of advertising on brand preference of consumer durables are independent of demographic variables.

6. Methodology

This research study is primarily an empirical study on the effect of advertising on consumer behaviour relating to selected consumer durables in Kerala. The products selected for the study are Television, Refrigerator, Washing Machine, Mixer Grinder and Induction Cooker.

Data Collection

In order to carry out the study with the above mentioned objectives in mind, the primary data have been collected with the help of a structured questionnaire and informal personal discussions with the sample respondents. The secondary data have been collected from different sources such as published research papers, research articles in national and international journals, seminar reports, newspapers, books, departmental publications and working papers.

Sampling technique

Sample is the fraction of the population; sampling is a technique or a method of selection of samples. The researcher in carrying out this research adopted the most appropriate sampling technique for research that is the stratified random sampling technique. Since the universe (viewers of advertisements) constitutes an infinite one, a Census method is found to be quite impractical. Hence Stratified Random Sampling technique was adopted to select the sampling units. In the first step the whole state Kerala divided in to three strata viz. Rural, Semi-urban and Urban, from each strata 300 samples were selected randomly.

Sample Size

According to Patton (2002) Sample size depends on the research questions and objectives of the research and also the analytical skills of the researcher (cited in Saunders et al. 2009)[1]. Generally researchers don't restrict themselves to any specific sample size. Hyman (2000)[2] in their book Marketing Research kit for dummies said that many statisticians and researchers have already examined the statistical and cost implications of different sample sizes and have identified the appropriate sizes for different types of studies. The minimum sample size for conducting market studies is 500. For this present study 900 samples were selected randomly.

Data Analysis

The collected primary data have been statistically processed, classified and tabulated using appropriate methods. Statistical techniques such as scaling and scoring techniques are used for the analysis of the data. Likerts' scaling and Semantic differential scale have been used to analyse the attitude of respondents and nominal scale has been used to analyse the demographic profile of the consumers. The data collected through the questionnaire analysed using the SPSS software. The hypothesis formulated for the study was tested with the help of parametric and non- parametric tests. They are Chi-Square, ANOVA, Contingency table / cross tabulation, Cramer's V, Kendall's W test, Friedman test, Kruskal Wallis test, Mann–Whitney–Wilcoxon test, Correlation and Factor analysis.

7. Major findings of the study

- Most of the respondents (86 per cent) are interested to watch / listen advertisements in different media. The respondents are of the opinion that advertisements are important in terms of enjoying and gaining product information.

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[1] Saunders, M., Lewis, P and Thornhill, A., (2009). Research Method for Business Students. 5th ed. Essex: Pearson Education, p. 235.

[2] Hyman R Michael PhD, Sierra J Jeremy PhD,(2000) Marketing Research Kit for dummies , 3rd ed. Pearson Education, p. 164.

- Television is the most favourite medium of advertising by 69.1 per cent of the respondents. The second most favourite medium is Newspaper (18.9 per cent). 9.2 per cent prefer magazines as their favourite medium of advertisement. Only 2.8 per cent of the respondents prefer bill boards as their favourite medium of advertising. From the table we can see that majority of the respondents prefer television as their favourite medium of advertising.
- Ranks given by the respondents for their favourite medium of advertising. Television is the most preferred medium followed by newspaper, magazines and billboards / hoardings. It is evident from the analysis, Kendall's value is high, here the male and female respondents are highly agreed with the ranking given for preference over medium of advertising.
- The study reveals that mean scores of different demographic categories of income, age, education and family type are significantly different at 95% level of confidence ($p<0.05$). Mean scores of different categories within gender are significantly different at 90% level of confidence ($p<0.10$). The relationships of these five demographic variables (for which F-test is significant). Thus we can accept the alternative hypothesis that there is significant difference in average attitude toward advertising for different groups within demographic categories.
- By analyzing the view points of respondents, 100 per cent of them were found to be aware about consumer durables.
- it is found that 100 per cent of the respondents are aware about different brands of consumer durables .
- The Respondents' Source of awareness about different brands of consumer durables, as many as 69.7 per cent of the respondents came to know through advertisements, 5.1 per cent of the respondents through visit to shop, 6.7 per cent of the respondents came to know through window display, 5.4 per cent of the respondents through friends and relatives, 6.9 per cent through previous experience, whereas for the remaining 6.2 per cent Sales personnels/ Dealers were the source of such information.
- The factors consider while purchasing Television, Majority of the respondents, i.e., 59.2 per cent consider brand name while purchasing consumer durables.22.6 per cent consider quality,12 per cent consider price, 2.3 per cent model/design, .8 per cent consider after sale service and 1.6 per cent of the respondents consider safety factor while purchasing consumer durables.
- By analysing the opinion of the respondents, it has been found that 100 per cent of the respondents have brand preference while purchasing consumer durables.
- 99.1 % respondents consider brand name as the most important parameter for brand preference of consumer durables, 98.2 % respondents believe that quality is an important parameter for their preference of brands. 96.9% respondents consider after sales service as the most important reason for the preference of consumer durable brand, 89.3% respondents consider price as the most important reason for the preference of consumer durable brand, followed by advertising (87.8%) and latest technology (85.6%).
- The frequency and percentage analysis of the data shows that 88.7 per cent of the respondents opined that advertisements change their brand preference and only 11.6 per cent are of the opinion that advertisements do not change their brand preference of consumer durables.

8. Suggestions

Based on the result of the findings of the study, the researcher suggests the followings.

- Advertisement should be made with keeping the determinants of effectiveness in mind. Advertisement should be according to the product and its suitability with different categories of demographic profiles. Make advertisement more effective all the determinants of effectiveness should be taken care of.
- A Since there is a significant difference between advertising media regarding the level of influence on consumer's behavior, that is advertising through television have the most effect on consumer's behavior of consumer durables and the reason of that is its extensive level of coverage and most of the people sit to watch TV within hours of the day and advertising through radio and internet have the least effect on consumer's behavior . so his recommended to activists of industry that if it's products have special and distinct features from competitors and feel that an immediate and contagious providing information should be done use television as their own advertising media.
- Since using the billboard, magazines and newspaper have also role in attracting the audience and increase demand for durables, so it is recommended to the activists of durables industry to invest on these advertising media also.
- One of the most powerful motivators for purchasing decision in the consumer durables market is quality motive. Therefore, the durable producer companies should focus on this motive and this should be highlight in advertisements also.
- The advertisement should aims to create faith and goodwill in the minds of the consumers and it should contain the core principles of believability, uniqueness, reputation and reasonable claims.

9. Chapterisation

The thesis has been organized into five chapters.

- Introduction
- The First Chapter dealt with theoretical perspective of Advertising and Consumer Behaviour.
- The Second Chapter gives an overview of Advertising and Consumer Durables industry.
- The Third Chapter provides a detailed analysis on the Effect of Advertising on Consumer Behaviour and Brand Preference with special reference to selected consumer durables in Kerala.
- The Fourth Chapter gives Findings of the study
- The Fifth Chapter provides the conclusions and suggestions of the study.